

THE GUARDIAN

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High Five

A young Iraqi boy's American flag-themed outfit earns him a high five from Canton, Ohio, native Sgt. Andrea Pierce, a tactical human intelligence team member with B Co, Special Troops Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division, during a patrol through the Gray'a't area of Baghdad's Adhamiyah District. Photo by Sgt. Michael Pryor, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs.



Life Flight

Medics at FOB Mahmudiyah help an Iraqi man to a MEDEVAC helicopter after he was struck by a car Sept. 12. He was flown to Balad for treatment. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Ben Brody.



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Black Hawk Up
A UH-60 Black Hawk helicopter carrying Lt. Gen. Ray Odierno, commander of Multi-National Corps - Iraq, flies on the outskirts of Baghdad. Photo by Sgt. Curt Cashour, Joint Combat Camera Center.

A Toy for the Baby

Lt. j.g. Jerry L. McNew, an information operations officer from Ocean Springs, Miss., with Regimental Combat Team 6, hands a stuffed animal to an Iraqi boy in Fallujah during the recent Operation Alljah. The Marines of Regimental Combat Team 6, Iraqi Soldiers, and Iraqi police are working together to provide better security and safer neighborhoods for the citizens of Fallujah. Photo by Cpl. Samuel Corum, Joint Combat Camera Center.



The Guardian is published monthly by Dennis Blessing, Service Officer of the Madera County Veterans Service Office. It is freely issued, via email, to all Madera Veterans and Service Organizations.

The primary purpose of this publication is to provide County Veterans with a timely news source; effectively informing veterans of VA up-dates and other pertinent information. Hopefully, it will also serve as an inter-group vehicle, announcing important activities and information offered by other local service organizations.

Your comments and suggestions are always welcomed.

Dennis Blessing, Publisher

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A Child's Smile

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Antonio Alvarado of Bravo Battery, 2nd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, jokes with a boy from Grey'at during a patrol through the Adhamiya District of Baghdad. Photo by Sgt. Jeffrey Alexander, Joint Combat Camera Center.



Building Relationships

Lt. Col. Jeffrey T. Connor, Commanding Officer of 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, and Maj. Brandon W. Graham speak with an Iraqi civilian during a mounted patrol through Saqlawiyah, Iraq, on September 4, 2007. Marines with 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment Personal Security Detail, travel to Forward Operating Base Riviera and Observation Posts Richmond and Stafford. Regimental Combat Team 6 is deployed with Multi-National Forces-West in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom in the Al Anbar province to develop Iraqi security forces, facilitate the development of official rule of law through democratic reforms, and continue the development of a market-based economy centered on Iraqi reconstruction. Photo by Cpl. Neil Sevelius, Joint Combat Camera Center.

The Guardian



Saber Hammer Spc. David Cordick of 2nd Battalion, 23rd Infantry Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, sets up a 60 mm mortar tube during Operation Saber Hammer II in Muqadiya, Diyala province. The operation, in support of Operation Lightning Hammer II, is part of an ongoing effort to remove al-Qaida in Iraq from the province. Photo by Pvt.



A New Friend

Staff Sgt. Shane Glowcheski, right, Rapid City, S.D., native and a platoon sergeant with B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, and Sgt. Hector Hernandez, top, a squad leader, are joined by a young student while taking a breather on the steps of an elementary school being renovated in the Graya'at neighborhood of Baghdad's Adhamiyah District, Sept. 9. Photo by Sgt. Michael Pryor, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs.



Checking on Girl's School

Pfc. Todd Thomas, center, a Hillsboro, Ohio, native and a radio operator with B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, leaves the Intesar Girl's School along with several Iraqi army counterparts after checking on the progress of renovations being done on the school, Sep. 7. The school is one of six being renovated by Thomas' platoon in the Graya'at neighborhood of Baghdad's Adhamiyah District. Photo by Sgt. Michael Pryor, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs.



Balloon Away!

U.S. Marine Corps Cpl. Tony Shaffer, from Marine Wing Support Squadron-271 (MWSS-271), launches a weather balloon to gather information for the flight line tower on Forward Operating Base Al Qa'im. Photo by Cpl. James F. Cline, Joint Combat Camera Center.



Taking the Lead
Iraqi Army Soldiers crouch along a main road before entering Al-Askari, a neighborhood of Khan Bani Sa'ad. Over the course of several days, Iraqi Security Forces reclaimed Al-Askari from Al-Qaida in Iraq while U.S. Army Soldiers from 2nd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, 4th Brigade, 2nd Infantry Division, provided blocking positions and logistical support. Photo by Sgt. Patrick Lair, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.



Water Break
Spc. David Bougourd (left) and Pfc. Mark Purcell (right) from Company D, 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, currently attached to 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, provide security for members of a local concerned citizens group as they take a water break during Operation Tuwaitha Sunrise in the village of Tuwaitha, Iraq, Sept. 5. Bougourd is originally from Norfolk, Va., And Purcell is from McDonough, Calif. U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Timothy Kingston.



Working Together
Iraqi men help install new 11kV underground feeders in portions of northwest Baghdad to provide more reliable electrical power to that area. USACE photo.



Pull Security
Soldiers of Headquarters Company, Personal Security Detachment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, from Fort Lewis, Wash., pull security for Stryker elements in the area in Taji, Iraq, Sept. 12. Photo by Spc. John Crosby, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division.

The Big Guns

Billowy clouds of fiery smoke hang in the air after field artillerymen from Battery B, 1st 'Dragon' Battalion, 82nd Field Artillery Regiment fire their M109A6 Paladin howitzer on Camp Taji, Iraq, in support of an actual combat mission. Photo by Staff Sgt. Jon Cupp, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division Public Affairs.



Standing Guard

An Iraqi Army Soldier stands guard while U.S. Special Forces search a gas station in the Wasit province, while checking on suspicious activities during Operation Iraqi Freedom. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Chris Perez, Joint Combat Camera Center.



Lend a Hand

Sgt. Steven Calhoun is assisted by Iraqi Army soldiers in pulling out a U.S. Soldier from Alpha Battery after he fell into an irrigation ditch. Alpha Battery, 2nd Battalion, 12th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division and units of the Iraqi Army conducted a cordon and search mission near Khan Bani Sa'ad to clear the area of insurgents and cache sites. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Scott Taylor, Joint Combat Camera Center.



Engage!

A soldier from Bravo Co., 3-144 Infantry "engages" a vehicle with blanks during a training exercise at the 82nd Sustainment Brigade Combat Logistics Patrol Academy on Camp Adder. Photo by Pfc. Robert Baumgartner, 82nd Sustainment Brigade, 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs.



Fish Market Patrol
Iraqi soldiers from the 4th Fighter Company lead the patrol through the "Fish Market" in the Rabi neighborhood in the Adhamiya District, Baghdad. Photo by Sgt. Jeffrey Alexander, Joint Combat Camera Center.

Wolf on the Prowl

U.S. Army Staff Sgt. Ebuardo Ojeda and 1st Lt. Evan Wolf of 2nd Platoon, Alpha Company (Engineers), 325th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division, decide where to strategically place their vehicles for a blocking position in the Al Suleikh neighborhood of Baghdad's Adhamiya District. Photo by Sgt. Jeffrey Alexander, Joint Combat Camera Center.



Prepare to Assault

Two Iraqi Army Soldiers prepare to assault an enemy position during a mission with Alpha Battery. Alpha Battery, 2nd Battalion, 12th Field Artillery Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division and units of the Iraqi Army conducted a cordon and search mission near Khan Bani Sa'ad to clear the area of insurgents and cache sites. Photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Scott Taylor, Joint Combat Camera Center.



For the Iraqis
Spc. Raymond Connolly drills a hole in a metal pole, which will be used as part of a portable aid station at Forward Operating Base Prosperity in central Baghdad, Sept. 9. The aid station was constructed by members of Delta Forward Support Company, 4th Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st Cavalry Division, for an upcoming medical mission. Photo by Spc. Robert Yde, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 1st

Prepare for Everything

U.S. Army paratroopers from 2nd Platoon, Alpha Company (Engineers), 325th Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 82nd Airborne Division, practice treating casualties during improvised explosive device (IED) lane



Medical Care

Capt. Russell Giese, of River Falls, Wis., examines an Iraqi girl Sept. 8, in the Radwaniyah area of Baghdad, as the girl's mother looks on. Russell is a doctor with Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry Regiment, 2nd Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, attached to 4th Brigade, 1st Inf. Division. Photo by Spc. Ben Washburn, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.



Take Aim

Spc. Akif Mamedov, a Chicago native and member of the 4th Brigade Combat Team (Infantry), 1st Infantry Division Personal Security Detachment, takes aim with the M-107 .50-caliber sniper rifle on Sept. 5 at Forward Operating Base Falcon in southern Baghdad. The "Headhunters" of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 4th IBCCT conducted live-fire training to broaden their soldier skills. Photo by Spc. Ben Washburn, 4th Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division.





Fight Fire with Fire

A Soldier assigned to the 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry Regiment, 4th Stryker Brigade Combat Team, 2nd Infantry Division, from Fort Lewis, Wash., fires an AT-4 at a structure containing bomb-making materials Sept. 8, south of Baqubah, Iraq. Operation Rock Hammer, conducted in farmland and palm groves on the Diyala River, resulted in the discovery of 11 al-Qaida in Iraq weapons caches. Photo by 1st Lt. Richard Ybarra, 115th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment.

On Guard

U.S. Army Sgt. Ramon Medellin, with the Personal Security Detachment, 2nd Corps, provides security for Command Sgt. Maj. Neil Ciotola of Multi-National Corps-Iraq at a checkpoint in Siniyah, Iraq. Photo by Airman 1st Class Stephanie



The Innocent Freed

A tearful female relative greets Mustafa Hassan Ali (center) while he is escorted back to his house in the Graya area of Baghdad by Fayetteville, N.C. native 1st Lt. Larry Pitts (2nd from right), and Los Angeles, Calif. native Staff Sgt. Julian Romo, of B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 319th Airborne Field Artillery Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division. The paratroopers helped secure Mustafa's release from a holding facility after he was wrongly detained. Photo by Sgt. Michael Pryor, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division Public Affairs.



Prepare to Mount

U.S. Army Soldiers practice a variety of aviation employment concepts in northern Baghdad. Photo by Col. A.T. Ball, 25th Combat Aviation Brigade Public Affairs.

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